



June Newsletter 2025



— June is —

NATIONAL
MEN'S HEALTH
AWARENESS
MONTH

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Worried about a guy?

If you're concerned that someone you care about is struggling, the best thing to do is reach out. Below are ways to approach these difficult conversations.

Worried about a guy? If you're concerned that someone you care about is struggling, the best thing to do is reach out. Below are ways to approach these difficult conversations. Let's be honest, suicide can be an uncomfortable topic to talk about. That's often why people who are struggling don't ask for help. Whether it's a fear of rejection, stigma, feeling a burden, or being seen as less of a man somehow, these worries can all mean someone stays silent.

They may try to soldier on and put on a brave face when inside they're suffering and may not even register how bad things are. Suicide is preventable and there are some things we can all do to help someone who is suicidal. Offering support and understanding can have a massive impact on a guy struggling to cope



Suicide is preventable

Who is at risk of suicide?

There's no one reason people end their own lives and under the certain conditions it can happen to anyone. Men are at higher risk of suicide and societal pressure to be tough and independent may discourage guys from seeking help during life's low points.

Other things can increase that risk, like substance abuse, a history of trauma and abuse, isolation, poverty, imprisonment, family or relationship breakdown, mental or physical health issues, and problems with work or money.

Often, people consider ending their life to escape what feels like an impossible situation. They may have searched for a solution to their problem and not been able to find one, leading them to believe that things will never get better and that nothing will help.

Someone may feel that they've let themselves or others down and

can't seem to find the point in living anymore. When the walls feel like they're closing in, suicide can feel like the only way out. This feeling of being trapped with unmanageable thoughts and feelings can make suicide feel like a way to take back control of an uncontrollable situation. Suicide can feel like it provides a way out in the absence of knowing any other alternative.


It's important to realise that there are different reasons and feelings involved for everyone. Types of suicidal thoughts vary between people and over time, both in terms of how intense they are and how long they last.

This means there's no blueprint for understanding what someone's going through and it's important to hear their unique story. However, there are things that seem to be common experiences for people who are suicidal. Knowing what these are and how to respond to them can help you to help someone else.

Choose to help

If you're worried that a guy you know isn't OK, it can be tough to know if and how to bring it up with them. But it's almost always better to speak up than stay silent. If you're worried about upsetting them, that's understandable. But remember, by bringing it up you may help to save their life.

There are certain signs to look out for and ways to approach the conversation. Familiarise yourself with the information below so that you feel empowered to help.



**Reach out
if you notice
a change**



Look out for signs and trust your gut if something feels

off Everyone goes through tough times, whether it's a break-up, losing a job, a stressful time at work or home, or feeling like a failure. These are also situations that can trigger suicidal thoughts or impact someone's ability to cope. When someone is struggling it could be linked to a single big event that has negatively affected them, or it could be a series of smaller things that build up over time. Either way, people respond differently and it's worth keeping an eye on a mate going through a stressful time, or someone who seems more down than usual. Sometimes there are warning signs and other times there aren't. Changes in behaviour might include unexpected mood changes, withdrawing socially, changes in sleep and eating, not having energy, feeling agitated and angry, self-neglect, risk-taking behaviour like drinking and taking drugs, and bringing up suicide or wanting to die, even as a joke. Often, If you think something is off, it probably is - trust your gut.

Prepare for the conversation

Think ahead about what to say and what might happen next. For example, do you have time in case you need to stay with them? Do you have details of organisations or resources you could signpost to that might help? There's more information on all of this below, but the most important thing is to feel prepared and calm going into the conversation. Choose somewhere private, quiet and where the person feels comfortable. You don't want to be interrupted and you want to have enough time to talk about what might come up. Avoid meeting in the pub or discussing these things over a beer - your effort to help will be diluted because alcohol impairs our ability to cope emotionally and recall the conversation! Be kind to yourself too. You're not an expert and you don't need to have all the answers. The most important thing is to know that listening and asking the question is the first step towards finding a solution. You might not have answers but there are people out there who do know solutions your friend isn't yet aware of yet.



Listen and signpost

Listen and encourage them to

open up Remember, you don't need to be an expert to help someone feeling suicidal, and you don't need to present a solution. In fact, you often don't need to say a lot. Listening and helping someone to work through what's going on in their head can be enough to save a life.

- Keep your phone away, make eye contact and focus on what someone is saying. This shows you care and are giving them your attention.
- Be patient, it may take a while for someone to open up. If they pause while they're talking, don't try to fill the silence. Often someone is formulating what they want to say in their head and may have more to share. You could count to 5 in your head to make sure you've given them enough time.
- Use open questions that don't have 'yes'/'no' answers, like "how does that make you feel?", and follow-up with questions like "tell me more". This stops you jumping in with your own ideas or viewpoints and gives people an opportunity to think and reflect. It also helps them feel they can open up without being judged. Avoid shutting down the conversation by saying things like "try not to worry about it" or "stay positive".
- Repeat back what you've heard to help make someone feel listened and paid attention to. This also works as a way to check that what you're hearing is what they mean.

- Take them seriously and don't deny what they're saying. People do act on suicidal feelings sometimes, so it's important to take them seriously when they open up about struggling to cope. Don't try to convince them of how lucky they are, or leave them feeling guilty about wanting to end their life or the people they'd leave behind.
- Stay calm and encourage them to talk the situation through. Try not to overreact or become upset if you can help it. Even though it might be upsetting to hear someone is feeling suicidal, staying calm helps them feel calmer too. Suicidal thoughts are common but suicide less so.
- Avoid making assumptions about what may have caused their feelings or what will help. Try not to judge, criticize or blame them for any feelings or behaviours. They have taken a big step by telling you, so just listen and be there for them.
- Reassure them that they can share what they're going through with you, and that you believe them and want to be there for them. You don't need to solve their problems right now. What you can say is that these feelings won't last forever, they will pass and that there is help available.
- Don't panic about saying the wrong thing. You can always follow up to apologise if you felt that something you said was insensitive and to remind them that you're still there for them.

Take action

If someone tells you they are suicidal and have made plans or intend to kill themselves, don't leave them alone. Stay with them and say that you want to get professional help. You can call their GP, or in an immediate emergency get to a place of safety. At the moment this would be the local Accident and Emergency, where they can access local mental health crisis services. You could also check to see if you can access your local crisis resolution home treatment team directly but this is less common.

If someone has said they're struggling but is not intending to act on their suicidal thoughts, still encourage them to take action. Ask what has helped them before or find out more about what might improve their situation. You could work with them to make a safety plan listing what they can do to take care of themselves, how they would like to be supported, and who can be contacted in an emergency. You could try setting some simple goals together, or make plans to meet up again soon. It can also help to encourage them to speak to other people in their life they trust. Check if they know where to get support by asking things like "have you talked to anyone else about this?", "would you like to get some help?", "do you have someone you trust you can go to?". It can be really helpful to signpost services designed to help people who are struggling to cope



Get support and know your limits

You don't need to approach this alone. Think about involving family, mates or colleagues who may also be able to offer support. This needs to be with the consent of your friend. There are lots of great services designed to help someone who is feeling suicidal, and some are specifically designed for men. You could point them in the direction of CALM, the Samaritans and others - there's a list of organisations on our website. Sometimes people find it easier to talk to a stranger than friends and family, so these can be a lifeline.

Supporting someone who is struggling to cope can be tough, remember to take care of yourself. Take time to look after your mental and physical health - get enough sleep, eat well, exercise, and do things you find relaxing and enjoyable. It can be hard to accept that someone close to you is feeling suicidal and you may feel a range of emotions, including fear, anger, confusion, or frustration which are all normal. It's important not to blame yourself for what is happening and to know that there are limits to what you can do to help. It may help to share how you're feeling with others. If you want to talk about your feelings or worries, or get support from people with similar experiences, there are helplines, professionals and peer support groups that can help.

Look after you

Keep checking in

It's a big step to bring up the conversation and you may never realise what impact you had - well done for stepping up. If you can, don't stop there though - check-in regularly and arrange times to catch-up. If you're mates, it's important to also find time to hang out as friends and keep doing the other things in life that you share an interest in. Face-to-face catch-ups are always better than texting.

**Stay in touch
and encourage
small steps**

Stay calm, hold steady,
and be confident in your
ability to be there for
someone. It's not easy but
you don't need the
answers, checking in and
listening goes a long way.



Additional support for you

Zero Suicide Alliance

Free online training – further understand the signs to look out for and the skills required to approach someone who is struggling.

www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training

Services to signpost to

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

Helpline for people who are down or have hit a wall for any reason.

Open 5pm – Midnight 365 days a year.

Contact 0800 58 58 58

Samaritans

Helpline geared towards listening to people in those moments of need.

24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Shout

Free text support service from all major mobile networks in the UK. Sometimes easier than talking!

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Text 85258

Papyrus – Hopeline UK

Advisors work to help people understand why thoughts of suicide might be present and provide support.

Contact 0800 068 4141



BraveBrothers.org.au

A resource to HELP A MATE IN NEED.

Life is tough...

Men today can face a wide range of challenges such as:

- Isolation
- Financial problems
- Needing to work away
- Excessive substance misuse
- Mental health problems
- Loneliness

It's normal if you are having trouble coping, feeling distressed and not dealing with life.

Are you a good mate?

We're a tough bunch and don't always speak up. If you know someone who is going through a rough patch, follow your instincts and ask them if they're ok?

Not sure how to start?

If you do not ask you will not know. If you do not know, you can not help. Make some mate time and stay connected. Pick your time to ask the "everything alright?" question.

If you've noticed a change, comment on that change,

Helping yourself and others.

Signs and symptoms to look for:

- Not sleeping or sleeping all the time
- Feelings of helplessness
- Lack of motivation
- Loss of interest in hobbies
- Difficulty concentrating
- Appetite and weight changes.
- Obsessive thinking
- Avoiding situations.
- Panic attacks
- Persistent sad, anxious feelings
- Substance misuse
- Any change in normal behaviour

Listen to your mate without judgement.

Let them speak in their own time, without rushing them or interrupting.

Maybe they are ok and don't want to chat, but they will know you are there for them

Encouraging Action

ASK them what would help

ASK how you can help

ASK if they have thought about visiting a doctor

Offer some phone numbers or websites that offer on-line-help.

Encourage them to put the numbers straight into their phone contacts or help them make the call.

You don't have to be an expert to have all the answers.

In fact, it's ok to not know what to say, just being there and listening could be a life saver. Calling a phone help line or using on-line help services offer a private safe place to talk with no judgement or shame.

Checking in. Check back in with your mate in a few days' time to see how they are doing.

Taking care of yourself.

If **YOU** are the one that's feeling down, find someone you trust to talk to. A mate, family or your doctor.

- Focus on the positives – no matter how small.
- Get active – go for a walk, run or whatever works for you.
- We are what we eat – Limit junk food and opt for healthier options.
- Engage in social connections – reduce your stress, have a good night's sleep, practice relaxation.



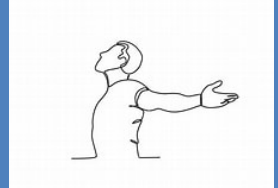
Brave Brothers

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MEN'S HEALTH

Deeper Listening. Better Understanding.

Men's Minds Matter



More and more people know about the higher male suicide rate. But still, not enough steps have been taken to help. There are many issues and pressures that men and boys face which require our attention. More needs to be done to help.

- On average more than 13 men a day take their own lives.
- 80% of homeless rough sleepers are male
- There are significantly higher rates of substance misuse and dependence in men.
- Men are twice as likely to be victims of violent crime.

Mental health has long been a taboo subject but attitudes are changing. Talking about mental health is becoming more socially acceptable. We're learning more about how to support each other and realising that most people have gone through similar situations themselves.

For further information on men's mental health and ways you can help and support visit www.mensmindsmatter.org

Maastricht Interview Training for Hearing Voices & Problematic Thought Beliefs & Paranoia Is available online and face to face from the National Paranoia Network.

Training available...

- **How to use the Maastricht Interview for Hearing Voices & Problematic Thoughts**
- **Beliefs & Paranoia**
- **Working through Paranoia**
- **Making Sense of Hearing Voices**
- **Working with Childhood Trauma**

Training can be delivered across the world.
For more information and costings email
peterbullimore@yahoo.co.uk

**For online Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Groups,
join our online group meetings on ZOOM.**

Thursday 3pm -4.30pm with Paul

Meeting ID 88460268952 Password 375878

Sundays: HVN USA on ZOOM 6:30p - 8:00p USA Time
with Cindee.

11.30pm – 1.00 am UK Time Meeting ID 827 5463 8654
No Password Needed

Saturdays Texas USA HVN Meeting on ZOOM

10am-11.30 USA Time with Paul

4pm-5.30pm UK Time

Meeting ID 85737775621 No Password Needed

Families/friends can contact

families@usahearingvoices.org for support groups.

Sheffield Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Group.

The group runs face to face every Monday

11.00am-12.00pm at the Gardner's Rest

105 Neepsend Lane,

Sheffield S3 8AT

Contact peterbullimore@yahoo.co.uk Tel 07590837694

Online Hearing Voices Group in Ireland

An online group for people who hear voices or experience paranoia and unusual beliefs. Please contact derekwalsh.dw@gmail.com for further information. The group meet every Sunday at 6.15pm over Zoom.

The group link <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81086179561>

Unusual beliefs group St Mungo's

Every Thursday 2.30-3.30

93 Shirland Road, London W9 2EL

Contact Helen Claire Taylor (tayloh15@lsbu.ac.uk)

'Talking Heads' Support Group

runs on every first Tuesday of the month at

Brunswick Centre,

Strand Close off Beverley Road

Hull, HU2 9DB

3pm – 4:30pm.

People with voices/visions and unusual beliefs are welcome. Contact Dan 07816 864727

Doncaster Hearing Voices Group

The Wellness Centre

45 Montrose Avenue

Intake

Doncaster

DN2 6PL

Tel: 01302618507



Join us at Butterflies and Beyond. A new weekly peer support group designed for new parents, parent-to-be and anyone who may have experienced birth trauma.

We will provide a nurturing environment for you to share, learn and heal during your parenthood and pregnancy journey.

What to expect:

- A friendly discussion in a safe environment
- Practical support and guidance
- Sharing experiences and challenges
- Building community and connection with other parents

All parents and caregivers are welcome. Bring your little ones along. No registration, just come as you are.

Our first session starts on 1st May. We'd love to see you there. For more information contact. lynsey@peoplefocused.org.uk



A weekly peer support group for new parents, parent-to-be and anyone who may have experienced birth trauma.

Join us in a safe space where you can share your experiences and build connections with other parents.

Refreshments provided. Just turn up
Thursdays - 10-11am

Safespace, People Focused Group
45 Montrose Avenue, Intake. DN2 6PL

For info contact:
lynsey@peoplefocused.org.uk
07592 893137

